

CABINET

Minutes of a meeting of the Cabinet of South Norfolk District Council held at South Norfolk House, Long Stratton on Monday 19 March 2018 at 9.00 a.m.

Members Present:

Cabinet: Councillors J Fuller (Chairman), Y Bendle, M Edney, L Hornby, K Mason Billig and B Stone

Non-Appointed: Councillors B Bernard, F Ellis, J Hornby, N Legg, T Lewis, G Minshull, J Mooney, R Savage and V Thomson

Also in Attendance: Mr T Gurney (clerk to Wymondham Town Council), and Cllr S Nuri (Wymondham Town Council)

Officers in Attendance: The Director of Communities and Well-Being (J Sutterby), the Director of Growth and Business Development (D Lorimer), the Head of Business Transformation (H Ralph), the Head of Early Help (M Pursehouse), the Head of Health and Leisure (S Goddard), the Monitoring Officer (E Hodds) the Accountancy Manager (M Fernandez-Graham), the Business Improvement Manager (S Pontin), the Early Help Hub Manager (L Pickering), the ICT Manager (C Balmer), the Operational Economic Development Manager (D Disney), and the Policy and Partnerships Delivery Manager (T Cooke).

2628 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Member	Item	Interest
Cllr J Fuller	Fair Funding Review (minute 2633)	"Other" interest as the Chairman of the LGA Fair Funding and Business Rates Retention Task Force.
Cllr L Hornby	Ketts Park Redevelopment Project (minute 2638)	"Other" interest as a member of Wymondham Town Council. Cllr Hornby chose not to partake in discussions or vote on the issue.

2629 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held 5 February 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2630 Electric Vehicle Charging Points in our Market Towns

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Operational Economic Development Manager, which outlined proposals for the Council to apply for an OLEV grant to install “fast” electric vehicle charging points in car parks in each of the market towns.

Cllr L Hornby commended the report to members, referring to the important role the Council could play in protecting air quality, and encouraging the use of electric vehicles. This was, he suggested, an example of the Council “leading the way”.

The Operational Economic Development Manager presented his report and outlined the salient points to members. He explained that although the car park in Harleston was leased to Redenhall with Harleston Town Council, the town would not be excluded from the opportunity to have charging points installed. Members agreed that the proposed locations should also include the Church Plain car park in Loddon, not the Staithe car park as indicated in the report.

During discussion, Cllr T Lewis, although supportive of the proposals in principle, sought clarification regarding the decision being made and he queried the risks involved. He suggested that a business case was required before the Cabinet could make any final decisions.

The Chairman explained that the capital provision for the project had already been agreed at the full Council meeting held in February, and that he did not consider there to be any significant risks or the need for a business case. The Operational Economic Development Manager reminded members that the current investment by the Council would be capped at 25k, as the project limit set by OLEV was 100K, and the grant would cover 75% of this.

Cabinet members expressed their support for the recommendations. Cllr K Mason Billig explained that she had attended the excellent member briefing on electric vehicle charging points, which she felt had dispelled many myths regarding electric vehicles.

She felt it prudent for the Council to go ahead with the proposals and take advantage of the OLEV grant, which might not be available in the future. She also suggested that consideration be given to the implementation of charging points in the Council office and leisure centre car parks. Members agreed that although the primary focus was on the market towns, this suggestion could be considered further, should finances allow.

During further discussion, members' attention was drawn to paragraph 3.6 of the report, which outlined the possibilities of a two-tier charging system, and the benefits this could bring to those who lived locally. Members also noted how the provision could attract tourists and additional visitors to the town, and the Chairman stressed the need to future proof installations so that future growth in the number of charging points was an option.

The Decision

- RESOLVED:**
- (a) To agree for officers to engage with manufacturers in a market assessment;
 - (b) To approve the application to OLEV for a grant to cover 75% of the cost of implementation of two Electric Vehicle Charging points in one of the car parks in each of the five Market Towns;
 - (c) That the initial proposed locations include Church Plain car park in Loddon (not the Staithe Car Park as indicated in the report);
 - (d) That should finances allow, the implementation of charging points in the leisure centres' and South Norfolk House car parks, be considered further.

The Reasons for the Decision

To assist in helping to reduce carbon emissions and tackle air quality, whilst supporting economic development in the market towns.

Other Options Considered

To do nothing and wait for other providers to install the charging points
To only provide the standard domestic style 8-12 hour charging points.

2631 Home Options Policy Changes Following Enactment of the Homelessness Reduction Act

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Housing and Benefits Manager, which sought Cabinet approval to make changes to the Home Options Policy, to ensure that it remained legally compliant and fit for purpose, in readiness for the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act.

The Head of Early Help presented the report, and members noted that only minor amendments were required to the Policy, due to the Council's preventative and proactive approach, that had already been adopted.

Cllr Y Bendle commended the report to members, explaining that the proposed changes built on the good work that was already taking place. She referred in particular to the Council's First Officers, who worked alongside residents to ensure that they had the right skills and understanding to retain their tenancies.

The Decision

RESOLVED: To approve the changes to the Home Options Policy, to take effect from 3 April 2018, as the Homelessness Reduction Act comes in to effect

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure that the Home Options Policy remains legally compliant and fit for purpose.

Other Options Considered

None

2632 DISCRETIONARY PAYMENTS DISTRICT DIRECT HOSPITAL DISCHARGE AND EARLY HELP FLEXIBLE FUND PAYMENTS

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Policy, Partnerships and Delivery Manager, which outlined details of the District Hospital Discharge Grant and the Early Help Flexible Fund, and sought their inclusion in the South Norfolk Housing Strategy 2016-19.

Officers outlined details of both the District Hospital Discharge Grant and the Early Help Flexible Fund. Members noted that the Discharge Grant sought to speed up hospital discharge times for patients, by ensuring that their homes were fit to return to, for example, through the fitting of temporary wheelchair ramps, the provision of key safes for carers, or temporary stair climbers. The Early Help Flexible Fund was able to provide emergency provisions for residents, such as food, electric or oil, or help maintain education, training or employment. Officers explained that the aim was to provide a holistic approach, and as part of any grant award, First Officers would also be providing assistance with any wider issues.

Cllr Y Bendle commended the report to members, citing the District Hospital Discharge Grant as an excellent example of partnership working

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The Decision

RESOLVED: To agree that the District Direct Hospital Discharge Grant and the Early Help Flexible Fund Payments are included as an addendum to the South Norfolk Housing Strategy 2016 -2019.

The Reasons for the Decision

To support the health and wellbeing of South Norfolk residents and to ensure an up to date and legally compliant Housing Strategy.

Other Options Considered

None

2633 RESPONSE TO FAIR FUNDING REVIEW TECHNICAL CONSULTATION

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Accountancy Manager, which detailed the Government's Fair Funding Review consultation and the joint response from six Norfolk District authorities.

Cllr B Stone commended the report to Cabinet, explaining that South Norfolk Council had led on producing a joint response to the consultation on behalf of six Norfolk district authorities. Members noted that due to the deadlines involved, the response had already been submitted, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources. Cllr Stone advised the meeting that any agreed formula would come in to effect from the 20/21 budgets.

The Accountancy Manager outlined the principles of the review, and drew attention to the key elements of the response, detailed at Appendix B of the report. He explained that the consultation was a technical document, and that there was currently not sufficient information to know how these changes would directly impact on the Council.

During discussion, the Chairman stressed the importance of the consultation and reminded members that there would be no Revenue Support Grant from 2019/20. He referred to the different issues facing rural and urban areas, and referred to the difficulty in measuring deprivation in the more rural areas. Cllr K Mason Billig expressed her support for the Council's response, referring in particular to Internal Drainage Boards and the need for transparency.

The Decision

RESOLVED: To note the report and endorse the response to the consultation.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure a fair approach to funding that meets the needs of local authorities.

Other Options Considered

None

2634 GENDER PAY GAP

Members noted that the Council was required by law to publish its gender pay gap figures. The Chairman was pleased to report a near parity between male and female employees' average pay, with the mean average pay gap being minus 0.3%, and on average female employees earning very slightly more than men.

The Chairman was enormously proud of this, stressing that the Council was committed to equality and diversity.

2635 STATEMENT OF CO-OPERATION WITH WAVENEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

Members noted that this item was deferred to the April meeting of the Cabinet.

2636 CABINET CORE AGENDA

Members noted the latest version of the Cabinet Core Agenda.

2637 LEISURE PRINCIPLES AND DRAFT STRATEGY

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the report of the Director of Communities and Wellbeing, which presented members with the draft Leisure Strategy, and proposed principles on which the leisure service would be developed.

Cllr Y Bendle commended the report to members, referring to the links with health and wellbeing and the impact the Council could have in ensuring healthier and more active residents.

The Director of Communities and Wellbeing presented the report, explaining that the Council was in a minority of district councils in terms of retaining an in-house provision of its leisure facilities. He outlined the proposed principles, and referred to the need to continue to extend the leisure offer outside the physical confines of the Leisure Centres.

The Chairman reminded members that the Council was not only providing a high-quality leisure provision, but also striving to provide an operational surplus for the Council, which was beyond reach for most local authorities.

Members referred to the exempt papers at Appendix 2 of the report, and it was then

RESOLVED: To exclude the public and press from the meeting under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended)

Discussion then followed concerning the future challenges facing each of the leisure centres, and the Head of Health and Leisure referred to the opportunities in extending the leisure provision, and the areas of focus over the next three years.

The Decision

RESOLVED: To:

- a) Agree the principles outlined in the report as a policy framework, as to how officers will develop the leisure service over the life of the Strategy;
- b) Approve and adopt the draft Leisure Strategy, subject to an additional paragraph demonstrating the leisure options available to residents in the East of the District.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure an innovative and planned strategic approach to the service, whilst continuing to deliver quality leisure facilities.

Other Options Considered

None

2638 KETTS PARK REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The Subject of the Decision

(The Wymondham Town Clerk and Wymondham Town Councillors were, with the agreement of the Chairman, permitted to be present for the duration of this item)

Members considered the *exempt* report of the Community Leisure Manager, which updated Cabinet on the progress made with the proposed project in partnership with Wymondham Town Council, to redevelop and enhance the sport and leisure facilities at Ketts Park in Wymondham.

The Chairman wished to convey his thanks to the Community Leisure Manager, Mark Heazle, for his hard work in progressing the project to its current status. On behalf of the Cabinet, he also expressed his deepest sympathies to Mr Heazle and his family, on the recent passing of his wife, Sharon.

The Head of Health and Leisure outlined the salient points of the report, explaining that the project had reached a critical point whereby decisions from both South Norfolk and Wymondham Town Councils were required. He drew attention to the external sources of funding and the associated deadlines, and members noted that Wymondham Town Council was due to consider the proposals at its meeting later that week. The Business Improvement Manager then explained in detail the issues relating to the section 106 agreements.

Member welcomed the proposals, referring to the enormous benefits the proposed project would bring, and the compelling offer of significant grant funding from partners.

During discussion, Mr T Gurney, Clerk to Wymondham Town Council, and Cllr R Savage (speaking in his capacity as Mayor of Wymondham), expressed some concerns and sought amendments to the relevant section 106 agreements so as to ensure that all future receipts were ringfenced to Wymondham. In response, Cabinet agreed that at this critical stage in the project, this was neither possible or necessary. Members noted that the section 106 receipts could only be spent outside of Wymondham, should there be no viable projects in the town.

Members stressed the real value of the project, not just in monetary terms, but to the health and wellbeing of residents in Wymondham and the surrounding area, and Cabinet urged Wymondham Town Council to approve the proposals at its meeting later that week.

The Decision

To:

- a) agree to deliver the Ketts Park redevelopment project in partnership with Wymondham Town Council, following the successful conclusion of negotiations (including the signing of Heads of Terms prior to 24th March 2018), including the Town Council agreeing to utilise the S106 receipt from the Carpenters Barn development. Should the signing of Heads of Terms not take place by 24th March 2018 it is acknowledged that the ability to deliver the project is severely compromised.

- b) agree that decisions to proceed with the allocation of capital spend outlined within the report, and the signing of any agreements with external funders to this project, and the signing of any agreement with Wymondham Town Council and any other parties to the development and operation of the Ketts Park site, be delegated to the Director of Communities and Wellbeing in consultation with the portfolio holder for Housing, Wellbeing, Leisure and Early Intervention.

The Reasons for the Decision

To deliver a project that would benefit residents in Wymondham and the surrounding area, in line with the Health and Wellbeing principles of the Leisure Strategy.

Other Options Considered

Do nothing.

2639 TELEPHONY PROJECT UPATE

The Subject of the Decision

Members considered the *exempt* report of the Assistant Director – Resources, which updated members regarding the Council's telephony contact.

Cllr Edney explained that the current telephony system was to be withdrawn from service as of June 2018. The Council was looking to ensure that any new system was future proofed, allowing for any growth or reduction in capacity and service provision, limiting costs and improving ways of working.

The ICT Manager explained the process that had been undertaken in order to identify a new telephony supplier and officers responded to a number of questions from members on points of detail.

The Decision

RESOLVED: To note the report and, due to the timescales involved, delegate the awarding of the telephony contract to the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the relevant Portfolio holder.

The Reasons for the Decision

To ensure a system which is future proofed and can deliver efficiencies and value for money for the Council.

Other Options Considered

None.

(The meeting concluded at 11.02 am)

Chairman